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Garth Ennis Russ Braun Darick Robertson

The BOYS™

FORTY-FIVE

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Garth Ennis Darick Robertson

The BOYS™

FORTY-FIVE

In a world where costumed heroes soar through the sky and masked vigilantes prowl the night, someone's got to make sure the "supes" don't get out of line. And someone will.

Billy Butcher, Wee Hughie, Mother's Milk, The Frenchman and The Female are The Boys: a CIA-backed team of very dangerous people, each one dedicated to the struggle against the most lethal force on Earth- superpower. Some superheroes have to be watched. Some have to be controlled. And some of them- sometimes- need to be taken out of the picture.

That's when you call in **The Boys**.

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WHAT...?

I'M A SUPERHERO.

MY NAME'S *STARLIGHT.* I MEAN NOT MY NAME, MY SUPERHERO NAME. I'M ONE OF THE SEVEN. I'M--

I'M A SUPERHERO.

ANNIE...

DID YOU NO' HEAR WHAT I JUST TOLD YOU? MY LAST GIRLFRIEND, THE LASSIE I WAS SEEIN' BEFORE YOU, SHE GOT KILLED BY A SUPE.

ROBIN, HER NAME WAS. I LOVED HER.

SO I MEAN-- D'YOU NO' THINK--

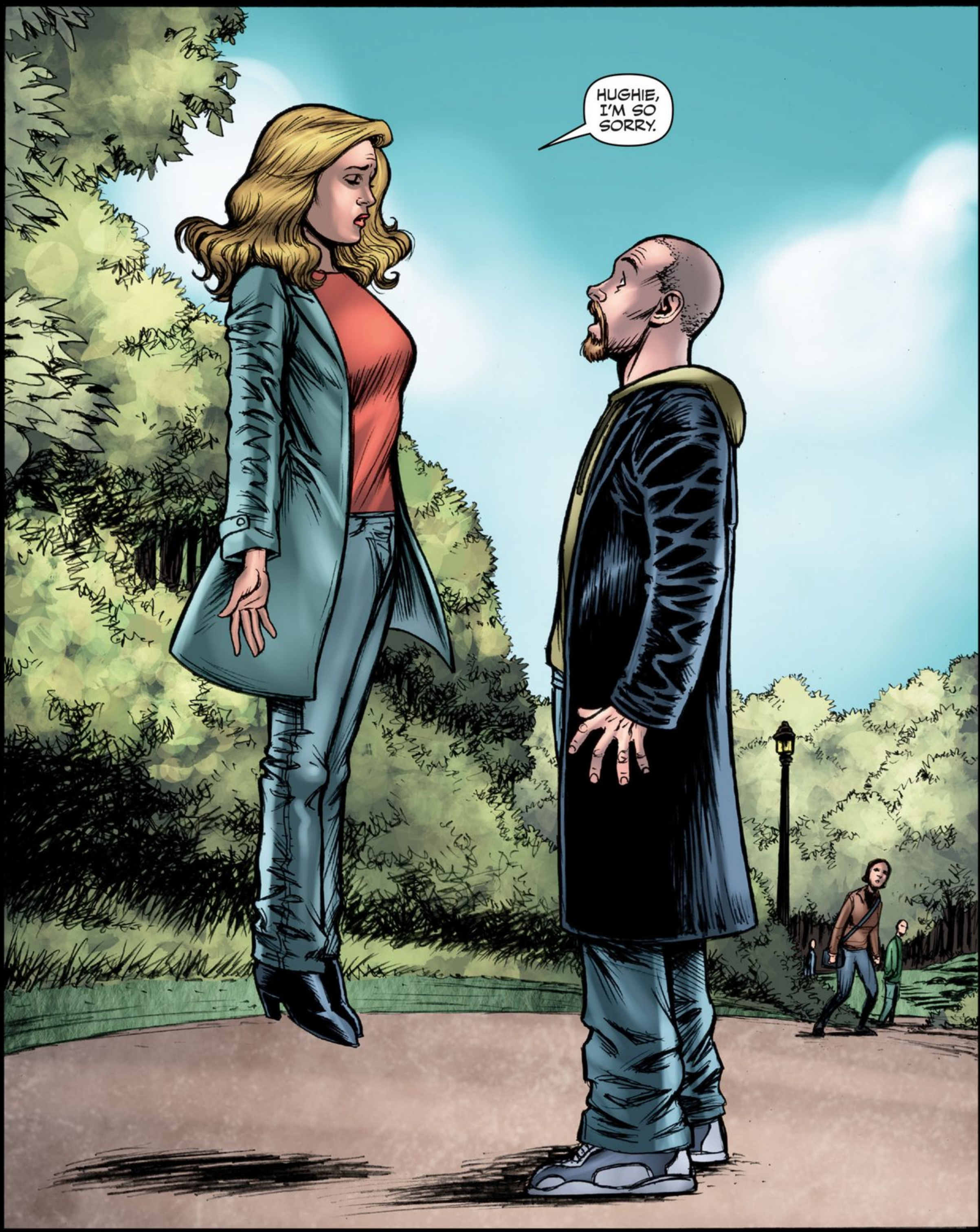
WELL LIKE IS THIS NO' A WEE BIT FUCKIN' SICK, YOU TURNIN' ROUND AN' COMIN' OFF WI' SHITE LIKE THAT?

I MEAN WHAT'S GOT INTO YOU? USUALLY YOU'RE LOVELY, I CAN TELL YOU ANYTHIN'--BUT HERE I AM TELLIN' YOU THE WORST THING THAT EVER HAPPENED TO ME AN' ALL YOU DO'S TAKE THE PISS...?

AN' I MEAN--

I--

I...



BELIEVE

part two

FRENCHIE...!

HMH.

I'VE...

BEEN GOIN' ABOUT THIS ALL WRONG, HAVEN'T I, MATE?

WUFF?

WE AIN'T GONNA HAVE A GO AT THE SEVEN. IT AIN'T GOT NOTHIN' TO DO WITH THEM.

WE'RE GONNA USE IT...

TO GIVE SOMEONE WHO NEEDS IT...

A GOOD FUCKIN' KICK UP THE ARSE.

YOU NEED ONE DELIVERED, M'SIEU CHARCUTER? JUST NAME THE RECIPIENT, I CAN GUARANTEE A MOST EFFICIENT SERVICE...

NAH, JUST TALKIN' TO MESELF, FRENCHIE.

THERE'S YER STUFF.

HUGHIE, PLEASE TRY TO UNDERSTAND--

THE LOOK ON YOUR FACE, I FEEL LIKE THE WORLD'S ABOUT TO COLLAPSE UNDER MY FEET AND I REALLY NEED YOU TO UNDERSTAND--!

I DIDN'T TELL YOU BECAUSE I'M NOT ALLOWED TO, WE'RE SUPPOSED TO HAVE SECRET IDENTITIES--I MEAN THAT WAS IT AT FIRST, BUT THEN I STARTED TO THINK ABOUT QUITTING AND I THOUGHT I WOULDN'T ***NEED*** TO SAY ANYTHING--

BECAUSE I REALLY AM GIVING IT UP. I MEAN THE FASHION THING WASN'T TRUE, I JUST SAID THAT--I--I HAD TO SAY SOMETHING, BUT I PROMISE YOU I ***AM,*** AND I THOUGHT YOU'D NEVER KNOW AND YOU'D NEVER NEED TO AND THAT WOULD BE ***SO GREAT***--

AND I KNOW THAT WAS STUPID AND I'M SORRY, BUT I DIDN'T ***KNOW...!***

I DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT YOUR GIRLFRIEND-- I MEAN I DID, I KNEW A-TRAIN HAD SOME TERRIBLE ACCIDENT, BUT I NEVER IMAGINED IN A MILLION YEARS THAT THE GIRL HAD ANYTHING TO DO WITH ***YOU***...

YOU SEE--YOU CAN'T IMAGINE WHAT THEY'RE REALLY LIKE, HUGHIE.

YOU JUST DON'T KNOW HOW ***AWFUL*** THESE PEOPLE ARE.

OH GOD, THAT'S SO STUPID, OF COURSE YOU DO. AFTER WHAT YOU WENT THROUGH, HOW COULD YOU NOT?

BUT...THERE ARE THINGS I'VE SEEN... BECAUSE I'VE BEEN ON THE *INSIDE OF IT*...

YOU SEE, ALL I--WANTED, EVER SINCE I WAS A LITTLE GIRL, WAS TO BE A SUPERHERO.

FIGHT FOR JUSTICE. BATTLE EVIL. BE IN ONE OF THE BIG TEAMS.

BUT THE SEVEN, THEY'RE JUST SO *HORRIBLE*...!

I MEAN THEY ALL ARE, ALL OF THEM, BUT THE SEVEN ARE WORST OF ALL! THEY'RE JUST THE MOST DISGUSTING, SELFISH, *HEARTLESS* PEOPLE IMAGINABLE! THEY'RE LIKE THE EXACT OPPOSITE OF THE WAY IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE, AND--

BUT THEN I MET YOU, AND YOU GAVE ME STRENGTH, HUGHIE. YOU HELPED ME BEAR IT. BECAUSE OF YOU I COULD SEE THAT I DIDN'T HAVE TO LIVE LIKE THIS, THAT I COULD LEAVE IT BEHIND AND BE WITH SOMEONE *REAL*.

HUGHIE, I LOVE YOU. YOU'RE THE ONE TRUE, HONEST THING IN MY LIFE AND I KNOW THIS IS CRAZY, I KNOW I LIED, BUT ALL I WANT IS TO *BE WITH YOU FOREVER*--

I'VE HAD TO--I'VE SEEN--OH, *GOD*...!

...OH, GOD.

DO YOU UNDERSTAND ME, HUGHIE?

DO YOU THINK YOU SEE?

UUUUUUUHH

ARE YOU--

NAHH!

NUH-- NUH--

GET AWAY! GET THE FUCK AWAY!

HUGHIE...?

HUGHIE, WHAT ARE YOU DOING--?

HUGHIE!

I BELIEVE WHEN I GIVE MY HEART, TO GOD IT WILL BE FOREVER

I BELIEVE, WHEN I GIVE MY SOUL, TO CHRIST IT WILL BE FOREVER

JESUS LEAGUE OF AMERICANS

REDEEMER'S

BELIE

WELCOME TO BELIEVE

CAPES FOR CHRIST SEMINAR AT ELEVEN

MEET OH FATHER, NOW APPEARING WITH SIDEKICK TWELVE

WIN DINNER WITH THE HOMELANDER HIMSELF

CAPES FOR CHRIST

Tees of Turin

HOLY SPIRIT

VINYARDS

BELIEVE

BEAUTIFUL DAY, GOD IS TRULY SMILING ON US

REJOICE

BELIE

BELIE

NON.

NOUSE SOMMES *WHOLESOME*, REMEMBER?

WHOLESOME...!

...MERDE.

CLAIREMENT, IF WE ARE TO REMAIN UNDERCOVER, ***MEASURES*** WILL HAVE TO BE TAKEN.

LITE UP MY LIFE

BELIEVE

BELIEV

ALL OF THEM?

OUI.

BELIEVE

BA

LIG

BELIEVE

BELIEVE

BELIEVE

BE

BEL

BEL

Sidekick Twelve

OKAY, FOLKS, LET'S GIVE **OH FATHER** AND THE KIDS OF **SIDEKICK TWELVE** A BREAK FOR NOW. WE HOPE YOU'VE GOT ALL THE PICTURES YOU WANT--DON'T FORGET THEY'LL BE BACK TO SIGN FOR YOU AT ELEVEN THIRTY...

THANKS, EVERYBODY. THANK YOU. WHEN THE LORD CALLS, THE **TWELVE** ANSWER-- BUT RIGHT NOW THESE **WONDROUS WARDS** HAVE TO CHECK IN WITH THEIR **GOD-FEARING GUARDIANS.**

DON'T FORGET, YOU CAN STILL ENTER THE CONTEST TO WIN **DINNER WITH THE HOMELANDER**--TICKETS ARE AVAILABLE AT ALL CONCESSION STANDS. THE WINNER WILL BE ANNOUNCED TONIGHT, RIGHT AFTER CLOSING PRAYERS.

APPEARING NOW AT THE **CAPES FOR CHRIST** EVENT IS **STARLIGHT**, THAT'S **STARLIGHT** OF **THE SEVEN**...

YOU KNOW, YOU'VE REALLY GOT TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THIS ADDICTION TO SIDEKICKS...

OH, FUCK ME. SPEAK HIS GODDAMN NAME ALOUD.

WHAT UP, BIG MAN?

I'M SERIOUS, YOU ANIMAL. THERE'S BLOOD ON ONE OF THESE SEATS.

YEAH, WELL, YOU KNOW HOW THAT GOES. WHAT'S HAPPENIN'?

OH, YOU KNOW, JUST PASSING BY. THOUGHT I'D SEE HOW THE PREPARATIONS FOR TONIGHT'S FARCE ARE COMING ALONG.

SINCE WHEN YOU GIVE A FUCK ABOUT THAT SHIT? WHAT HAPPENS IS, YOU FLY DOWN ONTO THE STAGE AN' GIVE 'EM THE SAME OL' GODDAMN ROUTINE, AN' THEY LAP IT UP LIKE YOU GAVE 'EM THE KEYS TO THE PEARLY GATES. AS USUAL.

Father

SO WHAT YOU REALLY DOIN' HERE?

BEST MAKE IT QUICK. THAT PEARLY GATES SHIT GIVIN' ME ALL KINDSA FUCKIN' IDEAS.

Sidekick Twelve

SAVAGE...

YEAH, YEAH, LET HE WHO IS WITHOUT SIN SUCK MY DICK. GET ON WITH IT.

ALL RIGHT, RELAX. I WANTED TO SOUND YOU OUT ABOUT A COUPLE OF POSSIBILITIES.

YEAH?

THIS... ANYTHIN' TO DO WITH THE SHIT YOU WAS TALKIN' AT HEROGASM?

YOU KNOW, WHERE ONE MINUTE YOU ALL *POSSIBILITIES* AN' *MY PEERS* AN' *VERY LITTLE CAN STOP ME,* AN' THEN IT'S LIKE NONE OF IT FUCKIN' HAPPENED?

NO. WELL--

NO, IT ISN'T THAT.

I NEED TO GET A SENSE OF THE LIE OF THE LAND; I WANT TO KNOW WHICH WAY PEOPLE MIGHT JUMP IN THE EVENT OF CERTAIN DEVELOPMENTS.

THAT'S WHY I CAME TO YOU. YOU KNOW WHAT WE'RE LIKE IN THE SEVEN, WE FLOAT UP THERE ON OUR IVORY TOWER--AND WHO'S DOING WHAT, WHO'S IN AND WHO'S OUT, WE BARELY NOTICE ANY OF IT. I WOULDN'T EVEN HAVE KNOWN ABOUT PAYBACK AND THE G-MEN IF VOUGHT HADN'T INFORMED ME PERSONALLY.

BUT YOU'RE NOT LIKE THAT, OH FATHER.

YOU KNOW EVERYBODY.

I'M AS BIG A LIAR AS SHE IS, JAMIE.

I KNOW I AM.

SHE DOESN'T KNOW WHAT I DO AT ALL.

AN' I DUNNO IF I'M MORE SCARED FOR HER OR FOR ME.

I'M JUST AS BIG A LIAR--

missed calls (14)

voicemail (8)

Annie

BUT SHE'S A *SUPE*...!

BUTCHER.

...ANNIE, PICK UP, JUST PICK UP--OR CALL ME, ALL RIGHT? CALL ME AS SOON AS YOU GET THIS!

OH FUCK, WHERE *ARE* YOU...?

SORRY, MISTER POTAMUS! CAN'T STOP!

UH-HUH.

TAXI--!

AMERICAN DOUCHE BAG

RB67

FUCK!

AW, *FUCK*...!

RB67

JF29

ALL RIGHT, MATE?

AAAAAAAHH!

...MUSLIMS AND JEWS, AND THE BUDDHISTS, AND ALL THE OTHER PEOPLE WHO BELIEVE WHAT THEY BELIEVE, AND THE ATHEISTS--ESPECIALLY THE ATHEISTS--

THEY'RE ALL WRONG.

BELIEVE

CAPES FOR CHRIST

AND THAT'S THE FIRST THING YOU HAVE TO ACCEPT: AS A CHRISTIAN, THERE IS NO COMPROMISE. NO CONSIDERING OTHER POINTS OF VIEW. NO MEETING ANYBODY ELSE HALFWAY.

YOU EITHER BELIEVE IN JESUS CHRIST AS YOUR PERSONAL SAVIOR OR YOU DON'T.

STARLIG

AND IF YOU DON'T, I, I, I PITY YOU...

BECAUSE TURNING YOUR BACK ON THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS A TRAGIC THING.

BUT THE POINT IS, GOD'S WAY IS THE ONLY WAY. THERE ARE NO OTHER GODS, NO OTHER POSSIBILITIES, NO OTHER PATHS TO SALVATION...

ARE THERE ANY MORE LIKE HER, D'YOU THINK?

LIKE HER? I DON'T EVEN KNOW THE BITCH, AIN'T SHE ONE O' YOURS?

SHE'S A BELIEVER.

IN THIS SHIT?

IN SUPER-SHIT. TRUTH AND JUSTICE AND RAH-RAH-RAH.

HER FAITH'S TAKEN A FEW DENTS, OF COURSE, LARGELY DUE TO BEING EXPOSED TO US. AND IT GOT A LITTLE COMPROMISED AT THE BEGINNING, WHEN SHE BLEW ME AND TWO OF THE OTHERS JUST TO GET ONTO THE TEAM.

BUT A BELIEVER SHE REMAINS...

SERIOUSLY, SHE--

SHE WAS CRAP. THE ONLY FUN IN IT WAS SEEING LITTLE MISS AMERICAN WAY WITH CUM ALL OVER HER PRINCIPLES.

THE QUESTION I'M ASKING IS, HOW MANY MORE OF OUR FRATERNITY SHARE HER OUTLOOK ON LIFE...

WHO THINK IT'S LIKE IN THE FUCKIN' COMIC BOOKS? JESUS!

UH...UNLESS YOU TALKIN' 'BOUT THEM RETARDED ASSHOLES IN SUPERDUPER, I'D HAVE TO SAY ZERO. I MEAN I THINK I SAW REACHER DICK HELP A OL' LADY ACROSS THE STREET ONCE, BUT ONLY SO'S HE COULD GET HIS HAND IN HER PURSE.

LITTLE 'HO OUT THERE ON HER FUCKIN' OWN...

GOOD.

THE LAST THING WE NEED IS ANYONE UPSETTING THE APPLE-CART.

YOU KNOW HOW VOUGHT ARE PUSHING THIS AGENDA OF THEIRS, THIS SUPERPOWER FOR NATIONAL DEFENSE THING?

OH FUCK, AIN'T THEY GIVEN UP ON THAT YET? SHIT AIN'T NEVER GONNA WORK, A GODDAMN BLIND MAN CAN SEE IT...

REALLY?

COME ON, WE AIN'T NO FUCKIN' BLACK OPS COMMANDOS, I MEAN YOU PEOPLE PROVED THAT ON NINE-ELEVEN. AN' BACKIN' VIC THE VEEP TO PUSH SHIT THROUGH--?

TALK ABOUT THE WRONG HORSE, MAN. WRONG CANDIDATE, WRONG SHIT, WRONG FUCKIN' PLAN: SUPES AIN'T NO USE FOR NOTHIN' 'CEPT MAKIN' FOLKS PAY TO GO *OOOOH*...

SUPPOSING THAT CHANGED. SUPPOSING THE PLAN WAS SUDDENLY VIABLE.

HOW FAR DO YOU THINK OUR PEOPLE WOULD GO TO ENSURE IT WAS A SUCCESS?

YOU MEAN HOW THEY GONNA FEEL ABOUT GETTIN' FUCKIN' DRAFTED?

NO: ABOUT GETTING THE PLAN ITSELF IMPLEMENTED.

IF VOUGHT WANTED THEIR HELP IN FORCING THE ISSUE.

YOU TALKIN' 'BOUT... WHAT I THINK YOU TALKIN' 'BOUT...?

GIVING VIC WHATEVER SUPPORT HE NEEDS IN WHATEVER CIRCUMSTANCES ARISE.

IF IT REALLY COMES TO IT.

OH, SHIT...

HOW MANY WOULD GO ALONG WITH THAT? IN YOUR OPINION?

Oh fathe!

UH...HOW THE FUCK YOU GONNA SELL IT, JUST TO START WITH?

LOOK HOW WELL WE DO OUT OF VOUGHT RIGHT NOW. IMAGINE HOW GRATEFUL THEY'D BE IF WE BACKED THEM ON SOMETHING LIKE THIS.

HUH. WELL. I SEE WHY YOU ASKIN' IF WE GOT ANY TRUE BELIEVERS OUT THERE.

'KAY...I DON'T THINK SECURITY GONNA BE A PROBLEM, ALL YOU GOTTA SAY IS ***VOUGHT*** AN' EVERYONE GONNA SHUT THE FUCK UP. BUT HOW MANY GONNA GO ALONG WITH IT...?

SIXTY, MAYBE SIXTY-FIVE PERCENT. TOPS.

OKAY.

CAN YOU ARRANGE A GET-TOGETHER FOR LATER ON? WITH WHOEVER YOU THINK'LL COME ON BOARD FOR THIS?

SOUND THEM OUT, KEEP IT VAGUE, AND I'LL TELL YOU WHERE AND WHEN.

UH...

GOOD MAN.

STA

BLOODY HELL, HUGHIE, WHAT THE FUCK'S GOT INTO YOU?

I'M, UH-- I'M JUST--

I WALK UP AN' SAY HELLO AN' YOU SCREAM YER BLEEDIN' LUNGS OUT, WHAT'S THAT ALL ABOUT...?

I'M SORRY, I WAS--I WAS THINKIN' ABOUT SOMETHIN' ELSE AN' YOU JUST SORTA SURPRISED ME, I DIDN'T EXPECT YOU TO BE THERE.

UM... WHAT'RE YOU DOIN' HERE ANYWAY, IS THERE, IS THERE, IS THERE SOMETHIN' WRONG?

NO, NOTHIN' WRONG.

HUGHIE... ARE YOU SCARED O' ME?

AW, FUCKIN' HELL.

IT'S NO' THAT I'M... I MEAN...

JESUS, I KNOW I'M NO PICNIC SOMETIMES, BUT I'M NOT JACK THE BLOODY RIPPER EITHER, AM I?

OH WELL, FUCK IT.

IT'S SORTA WHAT I COME UP HERE TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT, IN A WAY.

OH AYE? WH-WH-WH--

SOMEWHERE ROUND HERE WE CAN GO FOR A CHAT?

UH, NO' REALLY. I MEAN THERE'S THAT BIT O' WASTEGROUND WHERE I SET FIRE TO THE BLARNEY COCK, OR THE CRACKHOUSE JUST DOWN THE ROAD.

OR THERE'S A BAR A FEW BLOCKS OVER WHERE MISTER POTAMUS SAYS THEY LIKE FUCKIN' WHITE PEOPLE...

HMH.

WASTEGROUND. I DON'T DO ALL THAT WELL IN CRACKHOUSES.

SO, UH...

SO...

I KNOW YOU'VE BEEN HAVIN' A ROUGH TIME OF IT RECENTLY, HUGHIE.

MALCHEMICAL AN' THAT.

BUT ON TOPPA THAT, I KNOW YOU AIN'T ALL THAT HAPPY WITH THE WAY THINGS'RE GOIN' IN GENERAL. YOU NEVER HAVE GOTTEN YER HEAD ROUND THE IDEA O' HURTIN' PEOPLE. WE KEEP COMIN' BACK TO THAT, AGAIN AN' AGAIN.

AN' I THINK THAT'S WHERE I'VE BEEN GOIN' WRONG. TRYNNA FORCE IT ON YOU.

SEE, I COME OUTTA THE MILITARY, MATE. I'M USED TO HARDCASES LIKE M.M., OR EVEN THE ODD PSYCHO LIKE FRENCHIE OR YOU-KNOW-WHO.

YOU GET PEOPLE TO DO STUFF BY GIVIN' THEM ORDERS. YOU BOLLOCK THEM, OR YOU MAKE 'EM FEEL ASHAMED THEIR MATES CAN DO STUFF THEY CAN'T. MACHO BULLYIN', I THINK THEY CALL IT.

BUT THAT AIN'T RIGHT FOR YOU.

FUCK, LOOK AT THAT. YOU RECKON HE'S STILL IN THERE?

OH CHRIST, I BET YOU THE KIX NEVER BOTHERED TO MOVE HIM...

WHAT I'M TRYNNA SAY IS, HUGHIE, I AIN'T BEEN LISTENIN' TO *YOU.*

I TALK TO YOU LIKE YOU'RE JUST ANOTHER ONE O' THESE NUTTERS, WHEN THAT'S THE LAST BLEEDIN' THING YOU ARE. YOU'RE AN ORDINARY BLOKE.

FUCKIN' DECENT ONE, INTO THE BARGAIN.

YOU'RE ME MATE.

SO FROM NOW ON, IF SOMETHIN'S DOIN' YER HEAD IN, IF YOU'RE HAVIN' ANY KIND O' BOTHER AN' YOU WANNA TALK ABOUT IT: DO. YOU TALK AN' I'LL LISTEN.

THERE AIN'T NOTHIN' YOU CAN'T SAY TO ME. WHATEVER FUCKIN' PROBLEMS YOU'RE HAVIN', YOU TELL ME AN' WE'LL SORT 'EM OUT TOGETHER.

YOU CAN TRUST ME, HUGHIE.

ALL RIGHT?

next:
THE INSIDER